

HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

The Tameside Sustainable Community Strategy suggests that the quality of neighbourhoods and suitable housing provision for people in need should be at the top of our agenda. This emphasis is reflected in this Housing Strategy, whilst still giving attention to continuing concerns about the quality of the housing stock.

Our housing strategy properly complements the Greater Manchester (GM) Housing Strategy, currently being prepared. The GM Strategy is also about how partners can work together to make better progress across the city region.

Strategic Housing Priority One: Achieving the right quantity and quality of new housing

Strategic Housing

A Strategic Housing Market Assessment was carried out in 2008. Overall, it showed that Tameside is a component of a wider functional market area that includes parts of Manchester, Stockport, Oldham and High Peak, and includes strong commuter linkages with Manchester City. The high-level messages from this research are:

- The number of households in Tameside is projected to increase by 24,000 (13%) by 2031.
- The delivery of the priorities identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy by the Tameside Economic and Learning Partnership is very important for Tameside in asserting its role in the city-region economy, particularly reducing the number of working age population without a qualification.
- Overall, there is pressure on all types of housing, with the exception of terraced houses. The imbalance between supply and demand for open market accommodation is most pronounced for properties with one and four or more bedrooms, and in Longdendale.
- The delivery of additional affordable and accessible homes across the district is an important strategic priority. There is currently a shortfall of 424 affordable dwellings each year. Between 2006 and 2008 there were 103 units of affordable housing completed.

The provision of attractive new residential development is an important contribution to the prosperity of Tameside and the City Region; it brings new residents to the area and helps to retain and meet the needs of existing households. The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) sets a target of 750 additional new homes per year for Tameside net of clearance and replacements, up to 2021. Allowing for replacement, this will mean developing approx 800 new homes per year to meet the RSS target. There is then the additional provision to meet the growth point objectives bringing the total to 900 per year in the period to 2016/17. This is over one third more than the average rate achieved over the past 6 years

Affordable Housing

Tameside Summary Economic Assessment: Tameside's local economy is inter-connected with that of the Manchester City Region. The workforce is well placed, particularly in the west of the borough, to benefit from this geographic concentration of economic activity. Access to this labour market, both physically and in terms of having the right skills, is paramount.

- 6.2% of all jobs in Greater Manchester are in Tameside. The Tameside share of Greater Manchester working age (16-64) population is 8.3%, which means that there is a net outflow of workers to other areas including to the regional centre, Manchester.

- 22.5% of Tameside's residents are employed in the manufacturing sector compared to 11.4% in Greater Manchester. Tameside's economy is still structurally vulnerable with continuing manufacturing closures, which affect the borough disproportionately.
- Amongst the Greater Manchester districts, Tameside had the largest proportion of its residents engaged in "sales and customer service occupations" and the lowest proportion of its residents in the more highly-skilled occupations of "managers and senior officials" (10.6%) and in "professional occupations" (7.9%). Tameside residents' full time weekly earnings ranked 9th in Greater Manchester, some 92.3% of the GM average.
- The borough has a relatively high level of economic activity, the third highest rate in Greater Manchester. However, the overall employment rate has fallen since 2006 and at June 2008 stood at 73.2%.
- There were 6,463 residents in Tameside claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) on 9 April 2009, an increase of 86.1% from April 2008, higher than the GM-wide increase of 80.7%. The JSA claimant count rate in Tameside now stands at 4.8% of the working age population.
- Worklessness remains high in Tameside with 20,470 or 15.5%, of working age adults receiving out-of-work benefit. In some areas of the borough this percentage increases to 46.4%.
- Over 35% of residents aged 16-74 have no qualifications; only 11.4% of adults were qualified at degree level or higher compared with a national average of 19.8%.
- In 2007, Tameside had 28.9 VAT-registered businesses per 1,000 adults, the second lowest in the sub-region, compared with a Greater Manchester average of 33.

The need in Tameside for additional affordable housing is estimated to be over 400 homes per year if all needs are to be met over the next 5 years, and this priority is also strongly reflected in the views of stakeholders and residents.

The mix of affordable tenures will have to take account of market conditions and the affordability of the assisted home ownership options, but our starting point will be 77% social rent and 23% intermediate tenure, such as shared ownership as identified in the SHMA. Affordable provision should span all needs, including families, older people and people with special needs. Larger developments will normally provide for a cross-section of needs.

We will aim for a mix of types and sizes of affordable housing provision that will match identified needs. Based on the findings from the SHMA, this comprises

- 33.6% smaller (two bedroom) general needs;
- 52.8% larger (three and more bedroom) general needs;
- 13.6% older person (one and two bedroom).

An important strand of our homelessness strategy is to help people to access and retain affordable housing. The Audit Commission recognised the Tameside Housing Register as a model of good practice in the SP inspection.

Strategic Priority two: Continuing to raise the quality of the existing housing stock, services and neighbourhoods

Private Sector Housing

The number of empty homes vacant for longer than 6 months had increased, to 2152 at March 2009. Empty homes can be a focus for crime and anti-social behaviour.

The results of the 2009 Private Sector House Condition Survey suggest that generally the stock in this sector is in good condition. We are aware however that there are certain areas in the borough where quality and conditions are poor. There are approximately 75,000 private sector properties in the borough:

- 8.6% are privately rented compared to 11.2% in the North West. The remainder are in owner occupation, including shared ownership.
- A high proportion, 43%, is terraced housing compared to 29% in the North West.
- 32.4% fail the decent homes standard, somewhat better than England at 38%. It will cost £5,593 per property on average to make them decent. The highest proportion of failures by far is in terraced stock in the private rented sector.
- The average energy efficiency rating of the stock is 63, which is significantly better than the national average of 47 measured in 2006.
- 2.9% of private sector homes have been empty for more than 6 months compared to 2.14% in the region.

The concentration of poor conditions in the private rented sector suggests particular attention should be paid to the private rented. This message is re-enforced by the national report that highlights the strengths and weaknesses of this sector (the Rugg Review), and the government's subsequent response. Only 55.2% of vulnerable households live in a decent private sector home, compared to the North West at 59.3%, and the national target of 70%.

Social Housing

The dominant target relating to the quality of social housing over recent years has been to achieve the Decent Homes Standard (DHS). This is now close to being achieved by our Housing Association partners with stock in the borough. High levels of investment have been achieved, following the councils successful stock transfer to New Charter and Ashton Pioneer Homes in 2000 and subsequent transfers by Manchester City council to Housing Associations most notably in Haughton Green and Hattersley

The evidence gathered from the views of social housing residents identifies some concerns about the quality of the environment and the neighbourhood. Satisfaction levels have much improved but those for the "neighbourhood" are slightly lower than those for the home. Also satisfaction levels of social tenants are lower than those of the population as a whole.

Strategic Housing Priority Three: Connecting people to the improved housing offer

Supporting People

Over 5000 people in Tameside are supported every year through the Supporting People programme. The North West Needs Model, commissioned by the Homes and Communities Agency, uses demographic data, local information on supply and demand, national research findings and strategic priorities to predict future housing support needs for all groups covered by Supporting People. The key outputs for Tameside are in the table below, and suggest:

By 2020 we will need an additional 1200 units (net) of housing support. The requirement for accommodation based and non-accommodation based support vary within these figures.

- There is unmet need for accommodation based services (ABS) for frail elderly people and people with substance misuse issues; offenders and young people.

- There is unmet need for non accommodation based support (NABS) for all groups: older people; people who receive care and support and those at risk of social exclusion.
- There is a need to enable people who need support to access a range of affordable housing, or to remain in their own home when their needs change.
- There is an over-reliance on accommodation-based support for people who receive care and support services.

The Review of Move On, Arrangements found that there may be a shortfall in the provision of: accommodation with a continuance of floating support, especially for young people, offenders, single homeless, homeless families and people with mental health problems. Treatment based accommodation for homeless families, noting this is in the remit of Adult Services, not SP long-term care/support for people with mental health. Unmet need will be met during 2010/11 through the re-commissioning of floating support provided.

Older People

Older people in Tameside are provided with accommodation through the housing market and through housing associations. Housing related support services are provided through the Supporting People programme, whilst care services are provided through Adult Services and Health. The private sector provides residential care homes registered with the local authority and nursing homes registered with the health authority. The "Quality of Life Strategy for Older People" brings these elements together and is currently being reviewed.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment indicates that three quarters of residents aged 60 or over are owner-occupiers who will increasingly require a wide range of support at home, particularly help with home improvements (26.8%), gardening (30.4%) and domestic tasks (18.7%). The survey also highlighted the level of aids and adaptations requirements from older person households. Of particular interest is the requirement for better heating, better insulation and adaptations to bathrooms.

With the population of older people set to rise 45% by 2031, we have looked carefully at what conclusions we can draw from our evidence base:

- Most older people do not require specialist accommodation
- Movement within general housing stock is highly likely and not just moves into sheltered stock
- A need for space does not necessarily decrease with age
- Older people need better access to transport and amenities
- A feeling of safety in the home is important.

There is a limited supply of private sheltered flats & bungalows, which exacerbates pressure on social sheltered social housing. Influencing the strategic planning agenda is critical to improving the supply of private specialist older persons' housing and older person support issues should influence design.

Advice and Support

The Hills report identified that, nationally, worklessness on social housing estates runs at over 50%. In Tameside we see this as a critical link between housing strategy and Tameside's prosperity. When individuals and families are re-housed, estate managers are key in identifying support needs and matching providers to those needs, such as 'Life Skills training'. Levels of homelessness in Tameside have continued to fall despite the recent housing market turbulence, and we have met our government target to halve the number of households in temporary accommodation.

Helping people with a disability to live independently is a key aim of our housing strategy. In particular, we have a statutory responsibility to provide adaptations to accommodation where needed. This service is partially funded by government Disabled Facilities Grant, and Tameside's policy is set out within our Financial Assistance strategy. Disabled Facilities Grants totalled some £2.26m in 2008-09, its set to rise in 200910, and a dedicated team funded through capital funding delivers the service. We are undertaking a review of how this service is delivered in the future.

During 2007-08 homelessness acceptances fell by 50% to 122. At April 2009 we had recorded 584 cases of homelessness prevention. These achievements reflect the vigorous and inclusive Homelessness Strategy we have developed.

The main causes of homelessness in Tameside have been consistent over the past five years and broadly reflect national trends:

- Asked to leave by parents Asked to leave by friends or family
- Termination of assured short-hold tenancy
- Domestic Violence
- Relationship Breakdown

Reinvigorate and Integrate Communities

The SHMA household survey identified 4,431 households (4.6%) where the head of household identified with a Black and Minority Ethnic group. 6.1% of BME households were in housing need, with cost of accommodation, difficulty in maintenance and households sharing facilities the main needs identified. Only around 1.7% of older people are from BME communities, and CORE data shows that 2% of new admissions to sheltered housing are from BME communities. The Council continues to support asylum seekers & refugees through the UK Border Agency's Case Resolution project. This presents significant challenges for the council in securing accommodation and support services for the high numbers of households being granted leave to remain and choosing to stay in Tameside.

The North West Consortium which is responsible for the dispersal of asylum seekers to the region state that there were 311 applicants in Tameside waiting for decisions. Tameside, in partnership with the other nine Greater Manchester authorities, undertook a comprehensive assessment of the accommodation and wider service needs of Gypsies and Travellers in the Greater Manchester sub-region. The final report in May 2008 highlighted that Tameside has no permanent residential pitches for Gypsies & Travellers and a shortfall of 17 pitches. It also found there are currently 38 pitches for Travelling Show People, and a need for an 18 additional pitches up to 2015.